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III MIINICIPAI FINANCE

Pelham taxes poised to climb 2.75%

VICTORIA GRAY PelhamNEWS Staff

PELHAM - Residents of Pelham could face a 2.75% tax levy increase in

The town's 2012 budget met little opposition from councillors Monday

night.
"I think staff have done a good job preparing a budget that held the line on spending that we can control and presented the (increases) we couldn't control," Mayor Dave Augustyn said. A 2.75% hike would cost the average

homeowner an extra \$31.12 in town taxes - eight cents more a day.



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■ GEORGE KOWALSKI: Longtime volunteer retires after 29 years of service to Pelham Cares

By George, he did it all



George Kowalski, 88, is very familiar with the food shelves at Pelham Cares, having delivered food baskets to many of the organization's clients for 29 years. Kowalski recently retired from service.

EDDIE CHAU PelhamNEWS Staff

PELHAM - George Kowalski's heart is as big as the vegetables he grows. The Fenwick resident has lived all

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his live at the family farm on Foss Rd., where he grows and harvests a number of different fruits and vegetables. Searching for a location to sell his wares. Kowalski was often a fixture at the Welland Farmers' Market on weekends

Looking for another place to market his vegetables in the region, Kowalski decided to travel south to Port Colborne one day in 1959 and set up shop just near King George Park off Catherine St

"There were four of us who just started selling there," Kowalski recalls. "Every Friday morning we would be there selling our produce. We stayed there for a few months and it soon grew into what is now the farmers' market there. I guess you can say we started the Port Colborne Farmers' Market."

Kowalski's home at one point was filled with food, but it wasn't with anything he grew. He once opened his doors to Pelham Cares when the organization needed a place to store its non-perishable food donations.

see KOWALSKI I page 2

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KOWAI SKI

'I couldn't say no to Pelham Cares'

FROM PAGE 1

With his family members. Kowalski would go the extra mile to help out the organization by packing the goods and delivering food boxes to Pelham Cares clients. It was a service the now 88-year-old Kowalski took pride in doing

"I couldn't say no to Pelham Cares," he says, "I said, 'Come on down to my place.' My wife would make up the food baskets and I would deliver them. I had a 13-room house. We had three families living there. We had plenty of room at our

house for the food. Kowalski is no stranger to help ing out others. He had served as a volunteer firefighter in Fenwick for more than 30 years But it was becoming a volunteer

at Pelham Cares that has Kowalski beaming with pride. "I started with Pelham Cares in 1984," Kowalski says. "(Friend) George Prins talked me into it. He asked me if I would like to join Pelham Cares, I've been with them

Kowalski has primarily provided his services as a food deliverer. He remembers his first delivery was picking up food from the home of Alan Blackmore, where the food bank was located at one time. Along with friend Harold Griffin. Kowalski managed the Pelham

Cares food bank. Duties included

picking up food from businesses. homes, schools and service clubs, packing them and delivering them

Kowalski also volunteered to rep resent the organization at public events, at the Pelham Farmers' Market and the Pelham Home

Pelham Cares past-president Gail Hilyer once described Kowalski's devotion to the organization as unstoppable, much like the famed Energizer Bunny

But now, after nearly 28 years of volunteering with Pelham Cares. Kowalski has decided to retire. "When we found out he was leaving all of us were sad," says Betty Brown, the organization's client services co-ordinator. "We told him whenever he was in the neighbourhood that he should drop by. He will forever be part of Pelham Cares. He's a lifelong member."

Kowalski savs he's enjoyed every moment volunteering for Pelham

"I love meeting new clients, It's like a big family here," he says. "Plus, the women here take good

care of me." With his free time Kowalski says he will go back to his first love:

"I grow my own vegetables, I cook them and can them," he says with a smile. "I can cook whatever I like."

REAL ESTATE

Fenwick Lions looking at \$1.5M facility

VICTORIA GRAY

PelhamNFWS Staff PELHAM - The Fabulous Fenwick

Lions have outgrown their current They want to build a new commu-

nity centre in Centennial Park, but they need more space. Earlier this month, Lion Michael Hunter presented a solution to the

clubs problem to a town council chambers packed with Lions and Lionesses "There is room by the park, most

of the park is Greenbelt, so you can't build there, but there is in one place - baseball diamond No. 1," Hunter

The Lions want to swap deeds with the Town of Pelham.

In 1967 the Lions donated the land to the municipality for Centennial Park. Hunter said switching deeds is a "win-win" situation because the Lions will get the space they need to build a 1,350-square-metre community centre with a 2.160-square-metre facility to permanently house Pelham Cares, a large hall for patrons, a community room, Lions den, kitchen. food service stations and a large out-

door patio to cater to events in the park or for their own events. The town would receive another road access point to the park and the Lions hall parking lot.

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■ BUDGET

Councillors appear content on 2012 spending

Councillors spent the evening reviewing the budget presented by treasurer Cari Pupo. Staff were directed to keep the budget as close to 2011 numbers as possible. but items previously approved by council, including new Summerfest funds, new hires and additional bylaw services brought the budget up slightly

The budget is \$243,158 above the town's 2011 spending envelope. "The only increases are man

dated by legislation due to benefits requirements, previously approved items by council and a cost of living adjustment fort staff," Pupo said. "We have to pay for WSIB increases or it poses a potential risk for town

if we don't. Council will look into attempting to connect staff wage increases to their performance in addition to years of service, but it may take some time to implement.

"I think some of the key things that council is looking for more

information on are things like, making performance appraisals of staff more rigorous," Augustyn said. Staff have been using new purchasing methods which have helped keen costs down and allowed the

town to continue delivering services with the same level of care and diligence as in 2011. Every purchase the town makes greater than \$500 must go through a purchasing model which requires quotes from several different suppliers.

"Everything we buy from enve

lones to maintenance and renairs goes through this," Pupo said. "We did an analysis of costs from 2010 compared to 2011 over a period of six months and found we saved \$60,000."

This year residents will be able to take advantage of more camp and swimming programs, enhanced bylaw services, e-billing for utilities and taxes and better tools on the town's website.

The budget still requires final council approval.





tempo

■ LIFE: Adam Shoalts considers a canoe trip a failure if he runs into other humans

Deep in the woods

CHERYL CLOCK OMI Agency

ST. CATHARINES - For as long as he can remember, he's belonged in the woods As a boy, his playground was the 200 or so acres of deciduous woodlands next to

his home south of Fenwick There, Adam Shoalts would wander with his dog, Max. And there he'd stay. So long that his mom would sometimes drive up and down the road, honking the horn, to signal that it's about time he came home.

So. it comes as little surprise that at 25, he still feels most at home in the woods.

Only Shoalts isn't wandering the back 40 anymore. In his world of wilderness exploring, he operates on the general belief that if there are people around, it's not remote enough

His bio of wild places discovered reads like a resume of an early explorer who forged his way through uncharted territory. Last vear, he spent 40 days in the Amazon jungles. Returned, then headed out on his fourth expedition to the Hudson Bay Lowlands, a trip sponsored by the Royal Canadian Geographical Society. His main objective was to explore an unnamed, 100-kilometre stretch of river, keeping records of flora and fauna. He's in the midst of a PhD in history. His thesis: North American explorers

As a kid, he learned by doing He'd make shelters in the woods Lean-tos with sticks. leaves and evergreen boughs And A-frames from dead

branches and sticks he'd gather off the ground. He built tree forts His dad, Mark, taught him

to fish and they'd dip a line into many a local creek. Adam liked catching things with nets and foraging for food. He once started a fire in the woods and ate a frog.

expeditions he eats everything from oatmeal and pasta to freshwater clams, northern

nike, berries and cattail mots.) He joined Beavers and lasted a year. Didn't really fit in. Let's just say he was already doing more than the

Taming the Wild: A Handbook of Woodcraft Wisdom. Lost in the Barrens by Farley Mowat was a favourite. And all four books by his hero, Grey Owl. His other heroes were

Alexander Mackenzie. Samuel Hearne, David

When he was older he'd go canoe tripping with his Temagami, French River,

"Too many people for my

The more remote, the

He taught himself how to paddle a canoe. In high school, he paddled the Welland River and wrote about it for his English class And one night, with a friend, he canoed half the river by

moonlight And while he remembers an orienteering class in Grade 8 geography, he's pretty much taught himself navigation skills. He's a back-to-thebasics kind of guy that way Compass. Stars. Sun. He once brought along a GPS and satellite phone, but



average White Tail. He read books, Skills for

explorers.

father and twin brother. Ben. Massassauga Provincial Park. "I never went to Algonquin,"

hetter "If I saw another person on my canoe trip, I'd be dejected. Like I'd failed

> but I was bewildered once for three days." Adam has never been bewildered.

His first expedition to the Hudson Bay area was in 2004, when he was 18. In 2009, he was there again, bushwacking through Boreal forests with a Canadian Tire compass and



Supplied photo

Adam Shoalts drags his cance up the unnamed river that he explored, again for the RCGS last summer. He writes: "I think this picture best captures what it's really like: it was cold, dark, rainy, there is some rain drops on the camera, so it may not be the best focus but it is definitely the most realistic picture of what exploring these remote rivers is actually like.

that was only because the geographical society required him to have a safety plan. "The best technology is your

own skills," he says, "You'll enjoy the wilderness more."

He's never been lost. Although he likes to quote American frontiersman Daniel Boone, who once said: "I can't say as ever I was lost,

> habitation." he says. Truth is, the 15-foot

At dawn, he followed the sun, and operated on the

general principle that "all water flows out to James Bay." So, speaking strictly in the hypothetical, of course, if ever he was lost, he'd be reassured

by the fact that eventually he'd come out into James Bay. But, no, it wouldn't be totally smooth sailing from

"Once you got to the desolate coast of James Bay. you would have to travel great distances to find human

The trip lasted two weeks. "It would have been longer, but our canoe got destroyed."

fibreglass boat was pretty much destroyed before he went on the trip. But the temptation of a free canoe was too irresistible. So, he repaired it. Brought it on the trip. "There was no one

spectacular accident," he says, Just wear and tear from dragging it upstream. Bottoming out. Scraping on rocks. The usual stuff. They repaired the holes with duct tape and a butane

lighter to heat the sticky side so it stuck better. It worked for a while. Then, as the water seeped in and the boat would otherwise have sunk, they used another

strategy. One paddled, the other bailed. They managed with a few inches of water inside the boat, their gear bobbing

around inside. It wasn't so bad. The nature of exploring means more time is spent portaging on land than paddling in the water

When it floated no more (the canoe, not their equipment), they gave it to a local from Moosonee. And their expedition ended.

He's been to the Hudson Bay Lowlands four times. An area, he enjoys pointing out, with the highest concentration of blood-sucking insects. Black flies are the worst. Then sand flies. Leeches are blg. Six inches or so

"I've never had a leech on me," he says. "It's something of a miracle.

He's been bitten by a tick. "I thought I had lime disease once, but I was just perenoid!

At the start of his most recent expedition there in 2011, he slit open his thumb on the canoe gunwale while launching the boat into a choppy lake. It hurt. But no big deal, really,

Then it got a little sore. brushing up against so many spruce trees. So, he pulled out his first aid kit, and wrapped it up in duct tape. Then it started turning

Again, no worries, Nothing much he could do, anyway. He likes the hardship (maybe not in the moment. but afterwards). He likes the

upstream challenge. "I like testing myself against the wilderness," he says, At times he's torn between keeping his discoveries a secret to protect what little pristine wilderness is left and sharing his passion with the

"I love the wilderness," he "And I'm so heartbroken that it's disappearing."

■ To learn more about Adam Shoalt's wilderness expeditions, visit http:// adamshoalts.com/home

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Ken Kovama PUBLISHER, GENERAL WAYAGES Wayne Campbell, roros



Adults need a lot of coaching, too

Stop the presses.
It has been to It has been just revealed that parents and coaches contribute to aggressive and

dangerous play in minor hockey. Up next in headline news: Smoking causes cancer In a survey published by the Clinical Journal of Sport Medicine, a majority of minor hockey referees blew the whistle on fans and coaches, saving they are often key players in games that skate out of control. If an official can't control a game, the safety of all on-ice participants is at risk.

Nine out of 10 referees reported being the subject of verbal abuse during hockey games, and nearly half of the 632 respondents have been threatened with physical violence. Moreover - and perhaps ironically to some - these referees see what

many folks in the stands apparently miss. When grownups show a lack of respect for rules and a disrespect for officials. children are not far behind. The glass at the rink works both ways

If you are that red-faced, spluttering hockey parent hurling insults and making obscene gestures at the linesman, your child is likely on the ice engaged in his or her own trash talk, provoking his or her next concussion. Oh, and you look like an idiot Behaviour on the bench is even more critical, especially when young children are

Coaches and trainers are role models. Their job is to teach skills, Skills include skating, stickhandling, also how to handle frustration, recognize that life - and sometimes even things more importan

like hockey - isn't fair, and how to abide by rules even when you don't agree with them. Yelling at referees is so commonplace it is cultural, almost as much as the game itself But that doesn't mean it can't be changed. Minor hockey associations should provide more education for parents about the game, the rules and the expectations

There need to be tougher penalties for abusive parents At the end of the day, the rink is the workplace for hockey officials and they deserve a safe and respectful one.

Even - you know - the blind ones. - Andrea DeMees

comment

Update on Regional Road 20 Reconstruction

ust when you thought the construction work might be over for a while. I wanted to alert you to some major work that will affect Pelham this year - the expansion of Regional Road 20

from Rice Rd. to Station St As you will have noticed, over the last number of years the Region has been reconstructing and expanding Regional Road 20 from the 406 to Pelham St. Because of the length of roadway, the complexity of the work, and

the costs involved, the Region

undertook this work in phases.

The first phases began in

Pelham with the reconstruction

from Sobeys to Pelham St. This



Dave Augustyn MAYORAI VIEW

work added a centre-turning lane and the now infamous "islands" meant to calm traffic and beautify the Town

(After a dozen or so drivers hit those "islands", the Region installed flashing lights and large reflective markers; since the Niagara Regional Police charged more than half of those drivers with impaired driving, the NRP also increased R.L.D.E. checks in

In the next phases, the Region built four lanes from the 406 to Rice Rd. It also realigned the intersections at Merrittville Highway and at Cataract Rd (including a new traffic signal) to increase safety. This work required the purchase of several significant strips of property along the

roadway and at the intersections. The final phase will be the section from just east of Rice Rd. to just east of Station St. Again, the Region purchased property in strips and at the Rice Rd. intersection. You may have noticed that over the last six months, crews have been relocating the hydro lines along that area.

In the fall, I was pleased to support the inclusion of \$3 million in the Region's 2012 capital budget and \$750,000 in the Town's 2012

capital budget The works will include adding a centre turning lane (where appropriate), installing a couple of new "islands" to help calm traffic and delineate turning sections. realigning the Hurricane Rd. intersection, and preparing for an intersection leading into the East Fonthill Secondary Plan lands (the 450-plus acres to the south of Regional Road 20). The Town's money will fund the installation of a sidewalk on the north side of the road, replacing and upgrading the existing watermain, and replacing or repairing the existing sanitary

Regional staff expects to issue the tender in late-February; they hope that Regional Council can award the contract for an April construction start. While the successful bidder will set the timeline, staff expects the works to take three-to-four months

sewer laterals.

You may contact Mayor Dave at mayordave@pelham.ca or read past columns at www. pelhammayordave.blogspot.com.





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The issues with Highway 20

wonder how long it will take for Merritville Highway and Highway 20 to be called "Regional Roads" This issue will delve into three different issues affecting Highway 20. First off, the Region of Niagara intends to complete the Highway 20 project this year with the full upgrading of the section from Rice Road to Station Street. Motorists have already noticed the work undertaken to relocate the hydro poles. Be prepared for some minor traffic delays, Hopefully Rankin Construction will win this last tender as they performed the last two sections with minimal impact on the traffic flow

However, it is that strategy of doing one new lane at a time while keeping another lane open that caused some taxpavers concern when they saw the asphalt being dug into again last fall. When Rankin Construction created one new lane and then opened it to traffic, they went back



Brian Baty REGIONAL

to reconstruct the original lane. As a result the connecting asphalt created a cold or dry bond with the new asphalt. When that happens, it increases the opportunity for the crack to allow water in which, when it freezes, causes early breakdown of the road surface. The solution provided by Rankin

Construction was to grind out a small path where the seams were located. They then heated the asphalt to form a permanent bond with a longer life expectancy. While the strip is currently a darker black colour, it is expected that the asphalt colours will blend over time. It should be noted that Rankin

Construction completed this repair

Region of Niagara. A recent completion of a small

tower and solar panel just West of E. L. Crossley had some citizens speculating that this was to test the viability of future wind towers across the escarpment. Such is not the case. It is confusing that the company proposing these wind towers is called "Niagara Region Wind Corporation" as it is a private company with no connection or support from the actual Region of Niagara. However, it was the Region of Niagara's Public Works Department that built this tower as a

You may know from a previous article that Niagara is seen as a leader in reducing costs and reducing salt damage during its winter road cleaning and plowing. Based upon accurate weather information and forecasts, trucks stream a low salt brine solution mixed with beet juice to lessen the

weather station

amount of sand and salt that might be required during storms. This new weather station is at the highest noint on the escaroment and the station provides real time accurate data on temperature, wind force and direction as well as other critical data which is communicated to the

public works department. All snow plows are now outfitted with GPS devices and spray control capability which directs the drivers to change speed or spray patterns to ensure that the salt and/or sand remains on the roadway and not on to the shoulders and farmlands This environmentally friendly approach has been applauded by many communities across Canada and this new weather station allows the public works to fine tune their operations through the use of stateof-the-art technology.

Brian Baty is a Niagara Regional Councillor for the Town of Pelham. brian.baty@niagararegion.ca

New south hospital?

ALL AN RENNER PelhamNFWS Staff

WELLAND - A new hosnital could serve all of south Niagara in the not-too-distant future

In an exclusive story broken online Friday by OMI Agency's Niagara publications, Kevin Smith said it's one "potential option" he is seriously considering as part of his ongoing review of Niagara's hospital services "We'd really create a con-

solidated hospital with operational capacity in the south that really allowed us to do virtually all things a general hospital should or could said Smith, Niagara Health System's provinciallyappointed supervisor. However, he warned, a new hospital in southern Niagara would likely mean "the closure of the majority of the other sites" in south Niagara communities.

The new hospital model was among three options Smith discussed Wednesday when he met with Niagara's Local Health Integration Network board to update members about the work he's been doing for the past six months. The other two options Smith discussed included separating the NHS into two hospitals

systems, one for north and one for south Niagara; and retaining the current NHS administrative structure but giving more decision-making power to individual hospital

In an interview Friday. Smith told OMI Agency those three options are the result of consultation from frontline health-care workers, community leaders and residents.

He said he's further developing those ideas and plans to present them to the community this spring to gauge public opinion. A few months later, Smith will make his final report and recommendations to the minister of health and long-term care.

Mike Shea, chairman of the Hamilton, Niagara, Haldimand, Brant LHIN, said he was impressed with the ideas Smith discussed during his presentation.

"It really was refreshing to see how open and frank Dr. Smith was. It was an excellent presentation," Shea said. "He's put on a brand new pair of glasses. He's looking at



Niagara hospital makes sense for a number of reasons. He said it would make things much easier for medical staff working in existing hospitals, it would make it easier to recruit physicians and nurses. and having a larger team of medical professionals work-

ing together would improve working conditions. "It would also give us the opportunity to really look at

MYOME

consolidating our efficiencies. completely our critical mass, our capital open mind, purchasing. Instead of thinkwhich I ing about five places to do that think is the for inpatient care, particularly, right idea." we'd be looking at a site in St. Smith Catharines and a site in the told QMI south," he said.

Smith said the cost of building such a facility might not he an insurmountable hurdle to overcome.

"We know that there would be very, very significant capital costs in this project, but there would also be very significant capital costs should we continue to operate the sites we operate," he said. adding many of the existing hospitals are in need of very expensive renovations. Obviously, for this model to work within the backdrop

of the premier's challenge to

"I recommend it to my patients

us, it has to have some economic efficiencies within it," Smith said. "I think one could say there are significant efficlencies to be found by consolidating three or four sites into one.

Building such a facility would need consensus from among the communities the new hospital would serve and that would mean finding a location that everyone can

"Obviously, finding the right geographic location would be very important, I know there's been a lot of conjecture about how perfect or imperfect the St. Catharines site is," Smith said. "But I think we're more than prepared to work that

see HEALTH I page 6





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Supervisor sees dilemmas with NHS split

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a better environment ... for look at it today, my first blush

consider what can be done with existing hospital facilities should a new Niagara south hospital be constructed. While most sites would ultimately be closed, he said it would make sense to retain one of the current hospitals

Smith said he has begun to

and use it to help alleviate the alternative level of care problems that have plagued emergency departments for the past several years.

"Are any of those sites, particularly the smaller ones, a place where we might build a primary care/ urgent care interface, he said. Perhaps some of the cur-

rent facilities could be used by long-term care home operators. Although he's still consid-

ering the idea of separating the NHS into two hospital systems, he identified a few problems with that option.

"If this is about two completely separate hospital organizations via divorce, we have to recognize that we'll have fewer dollars to put at the bed side," he said. "For me, as I

not to come to any conclusion is really saying, 'What would be the advantage in separating governance?

He said it would require two CEOs, two infrastructures, two finance officers and would ultimately mean less money for patient care.

Instead, Smith said, he's leaning towards a system that would reinstate confidence in NHS management, and could include a community advisory board "that allows us to make sure what we're doing is consistent with what our community wants."

That governance model could also include more decision-making powers at the local sites

"The clarity of site leadership and site administration must be enhanced," he said. "In my mind, I think you want to have an administrative leader and a medical leader at each acute care site."

Shea said the LHIN's board of directors is "thrilled with the work that (Smith) is doing, and how he openly acknowledges the challenge and also the opportunities for improvement and the next steps going

Sat. Feb. 18 7:30

Sun. Feb. 19 2:00

Sat. Feb. 25 7:30

Sun. Feb. 26 2:00

Fri. Mar. 2 7:30

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■ HEALTH: Municipalities optimistic door open to building new consolidated hospital to serve south

Wide support for South Niagara hospital

DAVE JOHNSON and DAN DAKIN OMI Agency

If they're going to build it, it only makes sense to build it in Niagara Falls.

Niagara Falls Mayor lim Diodati isn't worried about the future of Greater Niagara General Hospital because he believes if the Niagara Health System decides to build a new hospital for south Niagara, it

should be in his city. The mayor was reacting to the news that NHS supervisor Kevin Smith is seriously considering recommending a new consolidated hospital be built to serve southern municinalities such as Niagara Falls, Welland, Port Colborne, Fort Erie and Wainfleet.

"It's not-a-nie-in-the-sky idea, it's a real possibility, said Diodati, who has spoken with Smith about the idea He believes it would make the most sense to build a new hospital in the area hetween Niagara Falls and

Welland. "If you

Diodati look 81 the demographic centre of the region. and where we anticipate that

to be in the next 20-50 years. it's in the area of Montrose Rd. and Schisler Rd.," he said. "It would make the most sense that it would be in the corridor between southwestern Niagara Falls and northeastem Welland

Though the idea of replacing several older, smaller hospitals with one new facility is still considered to be just one "potential option" by Smith, Diodati said it's a necessity. "There are a lot of problems

in the NHS and there aren't a lot of solutions that will deal with it both financially and with better

health care. but one

of them is consolidating into one site." "Although it looks like it

would be very expensive, it would be less expensive than trying to rejuvenate all of the other hospitals"

In Fort Erie, where the emergency room at Douglas Memorial Hospital closed in 2009, health care is a hotbutton topic. Joy Russell. a spokeswoman for the citizens activist group known as the Yellow Shirt Brigade, said she believes the idea for a new hospital was released by Smith as a way to gauge public

interest. "I'm sure he's waiting to see public opinion and how the

communities will react," she said. The Yellow Shirt Brigade

has been fighting to have Douglas Memorial turned back into a full-service hospital, but if that isn't going to happen, Russell believes a single hospital equally accessible to everyone in south Niagara would be the next hest thing.

"A hospital built near a major highway, like the QEW, would give immediate access to ambulance service needed to transport patients to the nearest trauma hospital," she



but said he hopes it doesn't turn into a fight between municipalities wanting to house it.

"I've always said to Dr. Smith that I would have no problem with it being in Fort Erie," Martin said with a laugh. "That's going to be the mantra of every municipality. but I hope the decision as to where it will go will take the politics and passion of each municipality out of it.

"The bottom line is it's got to be placed where due process, a lot of dialogue, debate and studies will show will be the best location to facilitate the needs of the patients that will be affected by it." Welland Coun, 2 Frank Campion said it didn't surprise him that one of Smith's suggestions would be for a

two-hospital system. If there is one NHS running two larger hospitals in north and south Niagara. things must be balanced so not everything happens in the north, said Campion, chairman of Welland

city council's health-care committee. If there are two separate systems, he recognizes there would be a lot of duplication between the two.

"Maybe there could be a hybrid system, but we'd have to have local representation that had a lot of clout."

Port Colborne Mayor Vance Badawey credited Smith for listening to people in the south end, unlike the

State of the Art Facility



Lasik ProVision is the Niagara Peninsula's only comprehensive retractive centre which deats with the treatment of common visual disorders. The centre was founded in its current location in 1999 and has evolved to a state of the art refractive centre with a global reputation for the laser correction of nearsightedness, farsightedness and astignatism. It is a world leader in bringing the treatment of Zelss Laser Blended Vision Vision for the treatment of presbyopic "reading glasses vision" to North America. In addition, the centre spacializes in the treatment of catavacts and comesi disorders such as keratoconus



Emander and modes director. Directors W. Taylor, is one of North America's leading ophthalmologists in the use of excinent season in intendicts suppay, 146
Colorated his model degines from the "University" of Toronto in 1910 and sear on to complete a specially marked by intendicting solution. But intendict on plant season season

Last Polvior: has evolved in the current location from its original incursation as Lastir Valorius, which brought affordable lastir eye surgery. In Not America, D. Taljour extractional surface within in 2001 as a founding principal and owner of cultaed MU, which there were not no expend in entertherist entiring accordinate, in 2005, Dr. Bryon left Lastic MU to focus or more customated patient eyecans in addition to bit base direct in Naigura Falls, he underwork an international expension to London, Freigand, Brussels, Belgium and the United States, Currently, in addition to his work in Naigura Falls, Dr. Talgori in revisional that device of a comprehensive or both service in Naigura Falls, Dr. Talgori in revision in the device of a comprehensive or both service in Naigura Falls, Dr. Talgori in revision in the device of a comprehensive or both service in Naigura Falls, Dr. Talgori in revision in the device of a comprehensive or both service in Naigura Falls. Palgori in revision in the device of a comprehensive or both service in Naigura Falls. Palgori in revision in the device of a comprehensive or both service in Naigura Falls. Palgori in revision in the device of a comprehensive or both service in Naigura Falls. Palgori in revision in the device of a comprehensive or both service in Naigura Falls. Palgori in revision in the device of a comprehensive or both service in Naigura Falls. Palgori in revision in the Naigura Falls.

That is exciting not in relation less on surply in the solidy of the procedure and the large of temperating originary resultable for particular, it is not that yet and considerable on the large of temperating originary resultable for particular, it is not that yet and particular contribution to the contribution support yet. The presented development in nourly sent in some trans or the law of yet and procedure is below. Set only does this create is three and more under this particular based, before option accounts, a limited to the based or the particular contribution of the particular contribution. The particular contribution of the based or particular contribution of the p The inclusion of the control of the

What is the future of refractive surpey? "The future is confirming to refine the refractive outcome with ever safer and less invasive procedures. I am very excited that within the next year, we will begin to fully utilize the fermiosecond isser's potential, going beyond the created not better flags to concluding the entire isse procedure within the comise without a flap. This may sound tike science fiction, but it is a reality and it am noround that is also as the science fiction in Regara Falls to bring this technology to North America.



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NHS.





'It's obvious we need a new model of care'

us, it's refreshing that he's taken note of what we've said. The NHS heard us, but didn't listen!

in south Niagara, he'd be in favour of it being run separately, not under the NHS. He understands the point of costs with two separate systems, but said if having one system run all the hospitals in Niagara was efficient, then why not have just one hospital system for the

"We still have to have a discussion about a governance system. We also need to rebuild the trust that the NHS

140 might make sense, especially with the Hwy. 406 expansion underway. "It's a discussion for another day, but

whatever makes the best geographic sense. It should be located conveniently

likes the concept. "It's obvious we need a new model

With the new hospital currently under construction in St. Catharines being nearly an hour away for Wainfleet residents, a hospital in south Niagara

the north end is complete," he said As for the location of a new hospital, Saturday.

Augustyn said when Smith spoke

with mayors in south Niagara, he asked what should be done in the southern end of Niagara with the existing facilities.

"He wondered if it would be a good idea to replace them. I think it would." Pelham's mayor said if a new hospital is built in the southern half, then the question becomes where it should be

located. "It needs to be where it best serves most of the population. It should be somewhere in the middle of the population, not buried away. Access to health

care is extremely important to people." Augustyn said Niagara Region is in talks about a separate access off of Hwy. 406 to get traffic to the new hospital in St. Catharines, which is at Fourth St.

"We're talking multimillions of dollars of infrastructure to make that hosnital operational.

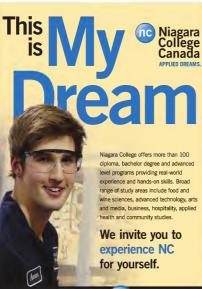
Also part of the conversation should be Niagara EMS and fire services.

Augustyn said he admires the fact that Smith is open and wants to hear from the community.

correction

and 1st St. Louth.

A story in last week's edition mentioned the jurying for submissions in the Pelham Summerfest Art Show, Jurving will take place the week of March 2 with notifications to participating artists going out by March 26. For more information on the art show contact organizer Pat Haftar at 905-732-9252 or via e-mail at phaftar@yahoo.com.





Applications received after February 1st will be considered on a first come first served basis





Badawey said if a new hospital is built

whole province.

Badawey said somewhere along Hwy.

for all of south Niagara."

In Wainfleet, Mayor April Jeffs also

of care," she said Saturday. "We're in such a mess with the (NHS), something needs to be done

would bring health care closer.





"It's a major concern for residents during an emergency." Jeffs said.



"A new hospital

would be about a

decade away. We

should start think-

ing about it as soon

as the hospital in









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Long list of contract talks ahead for region

JEFF BOLICHOWSKI QMI Agency

THOROLD - Costconscious Niagara Region is Jeff Vreeken, Local 1287 second vice-president set to hammer out new deals with seven union locals rep-

resenting more than 2,500 workers this year. And a new on wages," he said. deal for Niagara Regional The Region is already in Police is also in the mix. talks with Canadian Union of Public health workers and Public Employees Local 1019. paramedics dominate the list which represents close to 300

of unions whose contracts paramedics and dispatchers. with the Region are up for Citing a confidentialrenewal, with four eligible for ity agreement, CUPE Local binding arbitration. 1019 president Joe Brunarski But the region has taken declined to discuss the talks a tough tack on those rules, publicly.

lobbying the province at the "All I can say is we are still Association of Municipalities actively negotiating," he said. of Ontario conference last On e

year to tighten the arbitration The Niagara Region Police Association is un for a new contract, too. While it negotiates with the police services board, its budget is funded

from the region's coffers. "The (region's) ability to

pay is certainly an issue, said regional Chair Gary Burroughs.

He said while arbitrators, who can sit down with both parties and award a contract, are supposed to keep in mind cities' and taxpayers' economic situation, they seldom do.

Burroughs said regional council has set tight goals this year going into negotiations, aiming for at most a small salary bump and some benefit increases.

He figured there's some money to accommodate small hikes in the 2012 budget, approved last December but not much "Sure there's some leaway but ... council has deter-

in the talks or how she figured they would progress. "It's an interesting round." "But conciliation isn't

We want to be fair to the taxpayers as well. We don't want to bankrupt Niagara Region. We want to keep our workers working."

local, CUPE

Local 1757

that repre-

sents about

145 public

health

workers is

contract

until March

The bulk

31

of the workers the Region will

negotiate with are the more

CUPE Local 1263 and about

850 inside and outside work-

contracts expired Dec. 31.

mined we want a tight budget something that locals that can't strike go to a lot." She said she wasn't aware of the Region's talk of tightening arbitration or setting a

tight wage budget. Local 1287 second vicepresident Jeff Vreeken said he didn't expect much turbulence when the two sides sit down. He said they're waiting for the Region to wrap up talks with the paramedics before they can come to the table

"We want to be fair to the taxpayers as well," Vreeken said. "We don't want to bankrupt Niagara Region. We want to keep our workers He expected benefits

still under would be the big issue. New contracts are also needed for 110 long-term care workers and 150 public health workers represented by the Ontario Nurses Accordation Local 9 oc well than 1.000 long-term care as with International Union home staff represented by of Operating Engineers Local 772, which represents one maintenance worker at

ers represented by CUPE Linhaven Home for the Aged. Local 1287. Both of those Police association president Paul DiSimoni said the Local 1263 president Sarah union is set to sit down with Schmidt said the union has the police services board gone to conciliation with the shortly. He said they're look-Region and will sit down with ing for improvements in it in February. She declined wages, benefits and workto discuss the issues involved place conditions

"We've always been of the belief that our goal here is negotiating a fair and reasonable collective agreement for our members. We take all the factors into consideration,"

"I suppose if the direction from the Region is to be tough, that will determine the outcome of the negotiations."

The police union represents more than 1,000 uniformed and civilian members. Currently, a first-class constable takes home just over \$83,000 per year. In 2010, police were

awarded a 10% wage hike by an arbitrator in a three-year deal retroactive to January

Police are considered an essential service and cannot DiSimoni said the union

hopes to avoid arbitration. The negotiations loom over a closed-door regional council session to be held Thursday night that Burroughs said will focus on briefing councillors on how to handle a strike or other issue like, he said, an Occupy

movement. He said staff routinely do mock exercises for those situations, but council hasn't had one yet "We need to go over, first of all, what are essential services that must keep operating during any of those kinds

of things," he said. The Region employed

more than 3,000 people as of summer 2011. A similar contract crunch occurred in 2004, when seven

contracts came due over the course of the year. Burroughs played down the possibility of a work stoppage this time, saving "it's

way early in the game yet." calling a strike or lockout "not a good option." He said, "everyone knows that it's tough economic

times. Trying to work out the best for both sides is something everyone wants to do."

MAYOR'S YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL: Gelato Village helps with events



The Mayor's Youth Advisory Council was recently sponsored by Gelato Village to help cover the cost of running community events. Pictured are: Alyssa Girotti, Emma Caldwell, Madeline Wallace, Mike Ross, Ankit Seghal, Jacob Froese, Jenna Piunno and Gelato Village owner, Rocco Spano, Absent: Tolu Ola, Jonathan Covne, Connor Moffatt, and Brian Pulfer.

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Conservation authority puts new floodplain maps on hold

ALL AN RENNER PelhamNEWS Staff

WAINFLEET - The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority will not change the floodplains surrounding the Welland River - at least for

As a result of concerns raised by property owners, NPCA announced Monday it will continue using its floodplain maps dating back to 1985 for issuing building permits - despite new updated floodplain maps released in March.

Instead, the new floodplain maps will be used to advise property owners about the potential threats, and recommend that they take precautions such as flood-proofing measures when constructing buildings on property included in revised floodplain areas. But Wainfleet Mayor April leffs said she remains con-

cerned that could change in the months ahead. She said NPCA's decision was based on the recommendation of its board of directors at a meeting Jan. 18, Jeffs, an NPCA board member, was at

"I think it's only until June," At the same meeting, she said, the NPCA board established a working committee to develop a process for implementing the new floodplain data. The committee will include board members and NPCA staff, and, Jeffs said, "there should be residents on

that committee as well* An NPCA news release said the organization does not anticipate any new information regarding the updated floodplain maps until the end

of hine Last Thursday, more than 130 people from Wainfleet, Pelham, Welland and West Lincoln attended a public meeting at the Wainfleet firehall to discuss the issue.

leffs said she heard from residents "who are really, really concerned about this - about their property values and

everything Wainfleet Ald. Ted Hessels said the meeting was organized by a few concerned Wainfleet property owners who approached the township to ask if they could use city property to host the meeting.

Hessels said the township allowed the residents use of the firehall for the meeting, and also issued the invitations for the meeting.

"It just shows you this council is really trying to work with the residents of Wainfleet. Hessels said. "We were all there

in full support." leffs said she met Monday with Wainfleet property owners who could be affected if the changes are implemented. including farmer Gerry

Prentice said he wants more information. "I think every property owner will be affected somehow," he said, "The big question is what is the need to raise

the floodplain. That's the key question right there. Although the media release

refers to the age of the previous floodplain maps, Prentice said he suspects there maybe more to it than that.

Jeffs said Wainfleet and other affected municipalities are trying to determine what they can do.

"I understands (NPCA's) mandate is to protect people, and at the same time if it's going to hurt people financially down the road - that's a major. major concern," she said.

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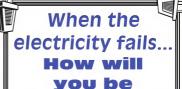
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AROUND TOWN

SATURDAY, FFR. 4 MEDITATION MORNING

Marcia leads beginners and those who have meditated before through a number of different types of meditations for stress relief at Pelham Public Library. Please bring pen and notebook. 9:30-11:30 a.m. \$3. Please register ahead 905-892-6443.

MONDAY, FFR. 6

FLIMINATING FINANCIAL MYTHS

Hear about financial myths and what options out there for financial independence. Presentation by Suzanne Hyne, associate from World Financial Group. 6:30 p.m. at Pelham Public Library.

MONDAY, FFR. 13

GETTING STARTED WITH YOUR KOBO

This session is designed to help you learn step by step how to download and use the Pelham Public Library's Overdrive e-books on a Kobo. You must have basic computer skills. A laptop computer will be provided. Please bring your Kobo, your email address and a Pelham Public Library card in good standing. 6:30-8 p.m. OR Tues., Feb. 28 - 10-11:30 a.m. Please register ahead in person. \$5.

TUESDAY, FEB. 14

ROMANCE IS IN THE AIR

Sandra Orchard, Author of Deep Cover, a Harlequin's Love Inspired Suspense Novel, Sandra Orchard lives in rural Ontario Canada where inspiration abounds for her romantic suspense novels set in the fictional Niagara town she's created as their backdrop. 2 p.m. \$2. Please register ahead.

EBOOKS ON YOUR APPLE DEVICE

Learn step by step how to download and use the Pelham Public Library's Overdrive e-books on an Apple device - iPod, iPhone, iPad. You must have basic computer skills. Please bring your e-reader. cords, your email address and a Pelham Public Library card in good standing, 10-11:30 a.m., Please register ahead in person, \$5.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 15

FAMILY AND FRIENDS CPR

Don't have time for the whole CPR course? This session is perfect for those individuals who would like to know CPR for their own family's safety. This short and easy-to-learn session is taught by Jessica Stewart, a certified instructor. * Note you will not get an official certificate for completing this training, 6-8 p.m. Please register ahead. \$5.

THURSDAY, FFR. 16

CROSSLEV CATWALK

A cyclone of fashion, art and theatre sure to blow you away. Original designs by student artists. 7 p.m. at E.L. Crossley Secondary School, Tickets on sale at 905-892-2635.

FRIDAY, FEB. 17 PELHAM ART ASSOCIATION

General meeting, 7 p.m. at Festival Room at Pelham Library, Town Square, Guest artist: Linda Kemp with watercolor demonstration.

TUESDAY, FEB. 21

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5 - 7 p.m. Adults - \$7, Children 6-12 - \$3.50 and 5 and under- free Everyone welcome.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 22

1812 REENACTOR

Calvin Arnt, 1812 Reenactor 1st Regiment, Lincoln Militia, founder of the recreated unit of local militia in the Niagara Region of Ontario, will share his experiences of reenacting and tell you how you can get involved in the 1812 Bicentennial reenactments. This family-friendly group takes part in War of 1812 events every year.
Part of the Pelham Library's 1812 Bicentennial Events, at 7:30 p.m. \$2. Please register ahead.

SUNDAY, FEB. 26 WOMEN'S ADDICTION RECOVERY MEDIATION

Luncheon and silent auction. Guest speaker Grace Cirocco, inspirational speaker, 11 a.m. at Club Castriopignano, 1311 Egerter

Rd., Port Robinson. \$40 per person or \$350 for table of 10. Tickets available at www.warmniagara.org

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